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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/007,460	12/05/2001	Radu Victor Balan	2001P18349 US01	3342
7590	01/26/2005		EXAMINER	
Siemens Corporation Intellectual Property Department 186 Wood Avenue South Iselin, NJ 08830			PENDLETON, BRIAN T	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2644	

DATE MAILED: 01/26/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/007,460	BALAN ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Brian T. Pendleton	2644

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 December 2001.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1,2,11,13-15 and 22 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 3-10,12,16-21,23 and 24 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 2, 11, 13-15 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gustafsson et al, US Patent 6,717,991 in view of Ephraim et al, "Speech Enhancement Using a Minimum Mean-Square Error Short-Time Spectral Amplitude Estimator". Gustafsson discloses a system and method for dual microphone signal noise reduction in figure 6 comprising a pair of microphones 584, 586 for inputting a mixed signal, spectral subtraction units 601, 602 which inherently Fourier transform the mixed signal into the frequency domain and a spectral subtraction unit 603 for computing a target signal in the frequency domain from the signals output from the spectral subtraction units 601, 602. Gustafsson does not disclose computing a short-time spectral amplitude from the transformed signals and a short-time spectral complex exponential and using those computations to compute a target signal. Ephraim discloses a speech enhancement method that computes a short-time spectral amplitude estimator (section II) and a complex exponential estimator (section IV) to construct a target enhanced signal. As discussed in the abstract, the method provides a significant reduction of noise and colorless residual noise. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to substitute the noise reduction method taught by Ephraim in the element 603 of Gustafsson for the purpose of improving its noise reduction capabilities. Claims 1, 11,

and 14 are met. Regarding claims 2, 13, and 15, Gustafsson discloses an inverse Fourier transform element 670 to produce a filtered target signal in the time domain. Per claim 22, Ephraim discloses multiplying the spectral amplitude by the spectral complex exponential.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 3-10, 12, 16-21 and 23-24 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian T. Pendleton whose telephone number is (703) 305-9509. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Le Huyen can be reached on (703) 305-4844. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Brian T. Pendleton
Examiner
Art Unit 2644

